SOCIAL ACTION DIGEST

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TRUTH-UNITY-PEACE

Excerpts From The First Encyclical of His Holiness POPE JOHN XXIII

Part I: T R U T H

KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH. The source and root of all the evils which poison individuals, social groups and even whole nations and confuse so many minds is this: ignorance of the truth - and not only ignorance, but at times a contempt for truth and a deliberate betrayal of it. From this source spring all kinds of errors, which penetrate into the deepest recesses of the soul and enter the bloodstream of human society as would a plague. These errors turn all values upside down and result in incalculable losses to individuals and to the whole social structure.

PRESS AND OBLIGATION TO TRUTH. Anyone who deliberately and rashly attacks the known truth and in his speech, his writings or his conduct employs the weapons of falsehood in order to attract and win over less educated people, to mold the inexperienced and impressionable minds of youth and to shape them to his own way of thinking, is without a doubt taking advantage of the guilelessness of the innocent and is engaged in a work worthy of the deepest scorn. Consequently, We must urge

to careful, exact, and prudent presentation of the truth those especially who, through books, magazines and the daily papers, so abundant at the present time, have such a great effect on the instruction and development of the minds of men, and especially of the young, and play such a large part in forming their opinions and shaping their characters.

PART II: U N I T Y - H A R M O N Y - P E A C E

TRUTH ADVANCES THE CAUSE OF PEACE. Once we have attained the truth in its fullness, integrity, and purity, unity should pervade our minds, our hearts, and all our actions. For there is only one cause of discord, disagreement, and dissension: ignorance of the truth, or what is worse, rejection of the truth once it has been sought and found. It may be that the truth is rejected because of the practical advantages which are expected to result from false views; it may be that it is rejected as a result of that willful blindness which men are all too prone to use as an excuse for vice and evil. A sincere love of truth, then, is essential for all, whether private citizens or those who hold the destinies of nations in their hands, if they wish to find that peace and harmony from which can arise true prosperity, whether of individuals or of society.

MEN CREATED AS BROTHERS. God created men as brothers, not enemies. He gave them the earth to be cultivated in the sweat of their brow that everyone might share in its fruits and take from it the necessities of daily existence. The various nations are nothing other than societies of men, that is, of brothers. They ought to strive not only for their own individual prosperity, but bound together in a bond of brotherly love, for the good of all human society.

Before all else, therefore, we must recall to minds and hearts the right principles if we wish, as we should, to guide our actions firmly along the path of justice. For if we are brothers in name and in fact, if we are made partners of a common destiny in this life and in the next, why then, We say, do we act as though we are adversaries, rivals and bitter foes toward each other?

Already there has been too much strife among men! Already far too many thousands of our young men have poured out their blood in the flower of their youth! Already too many cemeteries, gorged with the victims of war, cover the earth's surface and solemnly warn all of us to return at long last to harmony, unity and a just peace! Let us therefore, occupy our minds not with those thoughts that divide and separate one man from the other, but rather direct our energies at those things by which men can be united in a fair and mutual esteem for their respective goods and interests

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SOCIAL ACTION DIGEST (published monthly, except July and August) is dedicated to the promotion of the private enterprise system, of co-operation and fair dealing between management and labor, of interracial justice and harmony, and, in general, of the Christian reconstruction of the socio-economic life. Every issue brings several thought-provoking excerpts of outstanding books, articles and speeches.

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Dean Henry Engler of the College of Business Administration discusses TV economics course with Fr. Hubert Schiffer and Bro. Francis, F.S.C., principal of De La Salle.

University Awarded GE Grant For Economics TV Course

Loyola University's College of Business Administration has been awarded a grant of $2500 by the General Electric Corp. to conduct a course in economics for high school seniors using closed circuit television.

The course is being taught at De La Salle High School in New Orleans by Loyola professors under the direction of the Rev. Hubert Schiffer, S.J., of the Loyola business faculty.

An expected grant from another source will enable the university to film the course and distribute it, as a public service, to high schools throughout the state and nation.

HARMONY AMONG SOCIAL CLASSES. It is of the utmost necessity then, that this harmonious unity which is sought for all nations and peoples be promoted more and more among the various classes of individuals. Unless this is achieved, mutual hatred and rivalries can exist. This will result in riots, political revolutions, and sometimes even in murders. Meanwhile public and private resources diminish day be day and are stretched to the danger point.

On this point Pope Leo XIII notes with sound logic: "God ordained a difference of classes in the human family and along with this a kind of fair dealing by means of friendly cooperation." For indeed, it is clearly evident that "in the same way as in the body, the various members work one with the other and bring about that control of action that is called the right proportion, so nature has decreed that the classes work in harmony one with the other and contribute to the proper balance of the body politic. They have an essential need of each other: capital cannot do without labor, nor labor without capital. Their mutual agreement will result in the beauty of right order." (Encyclical "Rerum Novarum").

Another of Our predecessors of immortal memory, Pius XII, has spoken wisely in the same vein: "In a nation worthy of the name, those inequalities which spring not from the election of man but from the nature of things itself - We refer to those inequalities in mental and spiritual development, in economic status, and in myriad other facets of human life always with due regard to the demands of justice and mutual love - present few or no obstacles to their union in common brotherhood." (Christmas Message, 1944). Individuals, indeed, and various classes of citizens can safeguard their rights, provided they do it by legal means, not by violence, and provided they do not unjustly trespass on the rights of others which must be settled by friendly agreement and with brotherly love for one another.

SIGNS OF LESSENING TENSIONS. In regard to this point, We must confess - and indeed this gives rise to hope for a better future - that within recent times in some places the inter-class relationships are becoming less bitter and strained. Our most recent predecessor called attention to this in his message to the Catholics of Germany: "The frightful destruction of the last war which inflicted so much suffering on you, brought at least this advantage among the many classes of your people: prejudices and the exaggerated ambitions for personal advantage have come closer to a peaceful settlement. For hard times borne together have taught you all a helpful, though bitter, lesson." (Radio Address to the 73rd Congress of German Catholics).

As a matter of fact, class distinctions are today less pronounced than formerly. Since it is no longer a matter merely of "capital" and "labor," the number of classes has multiplied, and all of them are readily accessible to all men. Anyone who is particularly diligent or skillful has an opportunity of climbing to a higher step in the ladder of social standing. As for the wage earners, it is consoling to observe all the recent advances made to provide a more human environment in the factories and other places of employment. These improvements have done more than give the workers a greater economic value; they have made their lives nobler and more dignified.

LABOR PROBLEMS. But there is still a long way to go. For there still remains too great a difference in the distribution of wealth, there are still too many causes for hostility between the classes. This springs mainly from the concept of the right of private property, which is at times defective or downright unjust, held by those who are selfishly interested only in their own personal benefit and convenience. Add to this the dread spectre of unemployment which fills many with grave anxiety. Today, particularly, it can produce even greater hardships because the job of the worker is frequently handed over to some advanced type of machine. Of this kind of unemployment, Our predecessor of happy memory, Pius XI, uttered the complaint: "There are honest workingmen almost beyond number who want only an opportunity to earn for themselves in an honorable way that bread which they beg daily from their heavenly Father in accordance with the divine command. But, instead, they are reduced to idleness and, along with their families, reach the very depths of privation. Their groans touch Our very soul and force Us, moved with the same compassion, to repeat the sentiments that burst forth from the most loving heart of our Divine Master when He was faced with the throng of people fainting from hunger: 'I have compassion on the multitude.' (Mark 8:2)" (Acta Apost.Sedis, Vol.23, 1931, pp.393-394).

Indeed, if we desire and seek that ardently longed-for harmony among social classes - as we should —then we must do all we can to bring it about by public and private endeavour and cooperation in courageous undertakings to provide for all men, even those of the lowest classes, the opportunity to earn for themselves by their toil and sweat the necessities of life and to make provision for the future of themselves and their families in a safe and honorable way. This includes the enjoyment of many of the conveniences which modern progress has introduced into our daily lives and which even the less fortunate are entitled to enjoy.

Consequently, We earnestly exhort all those who hold responsible positions in the field of labor and those into whose hands falls the fate,and at times the very existence, of the workingman not only to weigh carefully the wages given for their hire, not only to see that their rights in this regard are protected,but also that they regard them as fellow men or more specifically as brothers. Employers should also provide in some suitable way for the workingman to share more and more in the fruits of his labor and to be made aware that he is, as it were, an integral part of the entire enterprise. We give this advice precisely in order that the rights and duties of the employer and employees be placed on a more equal basis and be correctly adjusted so that the respective professional associations "may not appear like armies ready to make or repel attacks in such wise as to make the enemy more resolute or to incite counterattack, or like a stream which sweeps aside or engulfs all obstacles in its path, but rather like a bridge which unites the parallel banks of the stream." ("Toward a Sound Social Order," Discourses and Radio Addresses of His Holiness Pope Pius XII, Vol.7, p.350).

ECONOMIC PROGRESS AND APPLICATIONS OF SOCIAL DOCTRINE. Particular care must be taken that moral progress does not lag behind economic progress. Anything else would be unworthy of Christians, or even of human beings. For what will it profit a worker to enjoy increased wealth, to enjoy the benefits of a more educated life, if goods far more important, goods that concern the immortal soul are lost or even neglected? The results will not fall below expectations,if the social doctrine of

the Church is applied in practice as it should be. Everyone then must "strive to preserve in himself and to arouse in others, from the highest to the lowest, that charity which is the mistress and queen of all the virtues. For that salvation so eagerly desired is to be expected primarily from a great outpouring of charity. We mean Christian charity, which is the law summing up the whole Gospel and which is ever prepared to dedicate itself to the advantage of others, and is man's surest antidote against the worldly pride and uncontrolled self-love: St. Paul the Apostle has described the characteristics of this virtue when he said: 'Charity is patient, is kind, is not self-seeking; bears with all things, endures all things.' (I Cor. 13:4-7; Letter 'Inter Graves,' Acta Leonis, Vol.9, pp.143-144).

We are aware that not a few of Our children in their poverty or destitution often complain that the Christian social teaching has not yet been put into practice. Work in this field, then, must be done with zeal and enterprise, not only by private citizens but particularly by those who hold public office in the state, so that Christian social doctrine which Our predecessors on several occasions clearly and wisely taught and proclaimed, and which We Ourselves also affirm, may as soon as possible be made really and thoroughly effective. Although this will have to be done gradually, no time should be wasted. (The End)

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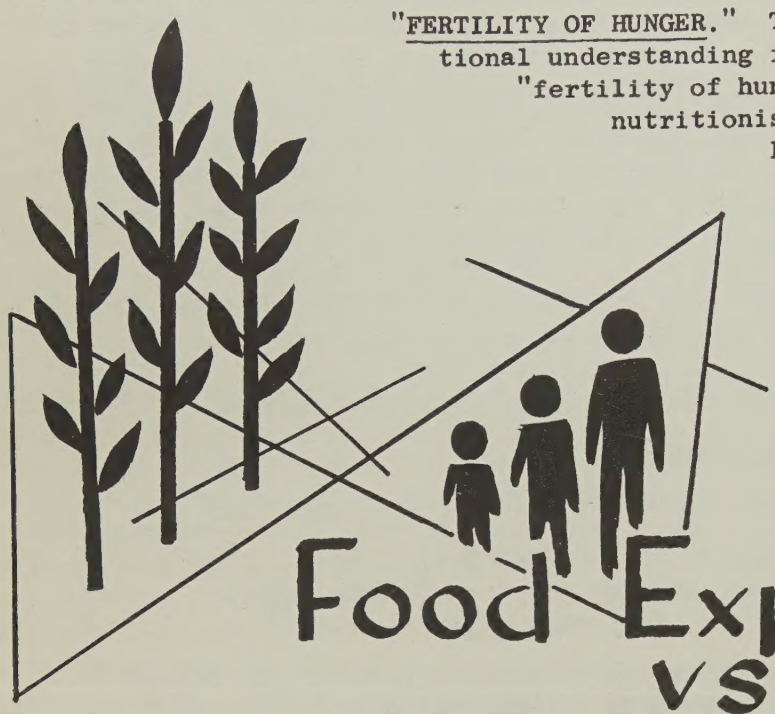
There is much genuine concern - even alarm - among very many well-meaning people about the imminent world "population explosion" following in the wake of the present "golden age" of both preventive and curative medicine. Many more people are surviving longer and better than ever before, especially in the so-called underprivileged countries. Ceylon, for example, aided by WHO (World Health Organization), has halved its death rate in only ten years! It is a sober fact that world population is presently increasing at the impressive rate of 1.6 per cent per year.



Food Explosion vs. Population Explosion

NATURE SEEKS COOPERATION, NOT FRUSTRATION

Nicholas Dietz, Jr., Ph.D.—Omaha, Nebraska

"FERTILITY OF HUNGER." The contribution from better nutritional understanding includes the important and relevant "fertility of hunger" theory of the noted Brazilian nutritionist, Dr.Josue de Castro of FAO (U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization). This theory holds that very low animal protein consumption (common in undernourished, overpopulated areas) engenders a pathologic,hormonally induced hyperfertility by virtue of liver damage brought on by the protein inadequacy. The birth rates in Formosa, India and Japan, where animal protein intakes were relatively very low, were two or three times higher than the corresponding birth rates in Australia, the U.S.A. and Sweden, where such protein intake was six to twelve times higher than in the other countries. In short, de Castro indicates that adequate protein nutrition tends to act as a natural brake, so to speak, on any "population explosion," whereas inadequate protein nutrition tends to accelerate it.

In any event, the question earnestly and constantly being raised in many quarters is: "Where will enough food ever come from as the population 'explodes,' when very many people even now go to bed hungry at night?" A common reaction to this threatening surplus of human mouths to be fed without enough food to go around, is that "after all - let's have the courage to face it - it is really a problem like that of an excess of rabbits at large vainly trying to scavange enough food to keep alive." The suggested solution very often is the Neo-Malthusian one: "Let's cut down the surplus of mouths by a humane program, government sponsored if necessary, of organized, systematic, artificial restriction of surplus births."

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Unfortunately such an approach, well-intentioned though it is, is actually not only in utter conflict with the innate dignity of man and the natural law which governs all men, but it also overlooks one of man's most cherished convictions - his strong and widely held faith in Divine Providence, which is supported by memories of such biblical events as the Providential manna supplied to the Israelites of old in the desert wilderness, and Jesus' miraculous multiplications of the loaves and the fishes to feed the hungry multitudes, not to mention the constant verbal teachings of Jesus, such as: "For your Father knoweth that you have need of all these things" (Matt.6) and "Do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows" (Matt.10).

Furthermore, it is not at all axiomatic that the population explosion will long continue. The neo-Malthusians calculate that there will be standing room only for the 290 trillion people in the world by the year 2690 if the population explosion goes on unchecked. This would amount to five square feet per person, and is, in the words of the population expert, Father Anthony Zimmerman, S.V.D., "a good exercise in mathematics, but it is demographic nonsense." Fr. Zimmerman foresees that there may be two more doublings of the human race before the population explosion ends and expansion then continues at a much slower pace. Two more doublings would result in a world population of about 11 billion.

Finally, the neo-Malthusian approach assumes that the present supply and distribution of good food cannot be greatly improved upon by man's efforts. Actually, this assumption is quite invalid, to say the least, in the face of all the scientific economic and historical evidence.

POTENTIAL FOOD PRODUCTIVITY. On the basis of the estimate of Colin Clark, director of the Oxford Agricultural and Economics Research Institute, of about 19 billion acres of "good temperate agricultural land" presently available, experiments would indicate that these acres could supply a population of about 38 billion without a single improvement in existing agricultural techniques. Note that this estimate excludes land in the torrid and arctic zones, as well as potential but presently unavailable temperate zone lands. Actually a total of only about twenty per cent of the earth's presently arable acreage is now under production, according to the U. S. Department of Agriculture, and nine-tenths of the earth's total land surface is not under any production.

One of the countries which is most fearful of overpopulation, and as a result, has been promoting a "family planning" program as a population control measure, is India. And yet India can be said to be more truly faced with underproduction than with overpopulation. Of her one billion acres which can be cultivated, only 80 million were under cultivation in 1952.

The continuing agricultural crises of chronic surpluses and their inevitable economic consequences in the U.S. and elsewhere, are largely due to the extremely rapid improvement in farming efficiency whereby more and more food and fiber are constantly being produced on less and less acreage by fewer and fewer workers. Paradoxically, these crises are self-perpetuating in that they are in themselves very strong stimuli for the improvement of farm income through the achievement of constantly greater efficiency. For example, between 1954 and 1958, there was a thirty per cent rise in the annual wheat yield per acre in the U.S.A. In America the amount of food and fiber produced per man-hour of farm work has doubled in the past eighteen years, and it is now costing the Commodity Credit Corporation the staggering yearly total of one billion dollars - over 100,000 dollars per hour - just to store our embarrassing government-held agricultural surplus.

MAN'S INGENUITY AND NATURE'S POTENTIAL. Greatly improved plant and animal strains and breeding practices continue to be developed, along with richer fertilizers, revolutionary plant stimulants, more efficient animal feeding programs, better crop

disease control and prevention, better insecticides, fungicides and weedkillers, more crop rotation, irrigation, water and soil conservation, reclamation, improved weather forecasting, etc. Rural electrification, many types of mechanization, mass production, and even automation are also releasing large acreages previously devoted to supplying food for farm work animals. Control of dread disease vectors, like the malaria-bearing anophelene mosquito and others, are releasing lush tropical areas which have been previously unavailable for agriculture or even for human habitation.

Large-scale, soilless, rapid and very efficient growth of protein, fat, carbohydrate and vitamin foodstuffs (algae and yeast culture, hydroponics, etc.) has progressed well beyond the research and development stages. De Castro estimates that one tank-factory for algae-yeast culture could produce enough precious protein for 3,000,000 people and enough fat for 1,500,000 people - the equivalent of tens of thousands of acres of arable land. Canning, dehydration, the making of concentrates, refrigeration, "deep freezing," etc. are constantly contributing to the better conservation as well as the better distribution of food supplies.

Scientific marine agriculture (the planting and harvesting of fish) can yield as much food per acre as can good land. Fresh water fish-farming has been successfully promoted by FAO in Haiti and elsewhere. An acre of warm pond water is reported to produce almost 1,000 lbs of fish per year without artificial food or fertilizers in Haiti. Even a rice field can produce 300 lbs. of fish per acre and also grow a rice crop.

It is already feasible to desalt sea water rather cheaply, at perhaps as low as 20¢ per 1,000 gallons of fresh water produced. It is not at all unrealistic to foresee a day in the not too remote future when the demineralized water which land vegetation requires will be pumped inland from coastal areas by inexpensive solar, tidal, atomic or other available forms of energy. This will mean that gigantic desert wastelands, like Africa's Sahara, Asia's Arabia, Iran or Mongolia, the Australian desert or our own parched Southwest, will be able to blossom out and burst forth as nutritional paradises. The greater part of California, as is well known, is quite arid. But this aridity has not prevented California from applying technical measures which have already made it, among its many other achievements, the leading agricultural state, and will soon make it the most populous of our fifty states. These changes are occurring, or can be anticipated to occur, all over the world, as man makes better use of the earth's natural resources.

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